

What Parents Need To Know About Teen Parties And Alcohol

(NAPSA)—As an adult, it can be tempting to be seen by children and teenagers as the cool mom, dad, uncle or neighbor. But sometimes the actions that lead to this can have consequences. One such behavior is providing alcohol to minors.

According to the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration, 10.8 million people ages 12 to 20 report drinking alcohol in the past month. Although a percentage of these offenders have older friends or siblings who supplied the alcohol, parents and adults are often the main supply source—either by letting kids have access to alcohol in the house or through condoning its use at parties they “host.”

Cutting Off The Supply

New research by Harris Interactive shows that 78 percent of U.S. adults believe there should be legal consequences for adults who host parties where people under 21 are allowed to consume alcohol. Oddly, despite their belief in legal consequences, half (48 percent) of all adults believe that people under 21 should be allowed to consume alcohol under the supervision of a parent or legal guardian.

“All states have laws that can be enforced against adults serving alcohol to minors,” said Alan Kopit, a lawyers.com legal editor. “The adults who most often face criminal and civil charges include those who either provide alcohol to intoxicated minors or adults that provide alcohol to those underage who are later involved in automotive crashes or other accidents.”

Tips For Party Hosts

“Adults are clearly conflicted by this issue, but the only way to

Underage Drinking

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- 48 percent of adults believe that people under 21 should be allowed to drink under the supervision of a parent or legal guardian.

Source: *Lawyers.com*SM



avoid risk is not to allow underage drinking at parties,” said Kopit.

1. The party host is responsible if anyone under 21 is found with alcohol. Specific laws vary from state to state and penalties are often based on precedent, so it is best to assess personal risk by speaking with an attorney in advance.

2. Ensure that minors are not served. Think of hosting a party at a third-party location with an alcohol license, such as a hotel, bar or restaurant. You can also enlist professional waiters and bartenders to ensure that guests are not served if they become overly intoxicated or are underage.

3. Have designated drivers and the number of cab companies readily available.

When in doubt, speak to an attorney to learn what you can do to protect yourself and your guests. To learn more about this or to find a qualified attorney in your area, visit www.lawyers.com, a comprehensive and trustworthy online legal resource. More information on the Harris Interactive survey, which was conducted for LexisNexis, can also be found on the lawyers.com site.